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ABSTRACT

This document provides a summary of legislative actions and issues in the member states of the Southern Regional Education Board (SREB). The economic slowdown continued to dominate legislative deliberations of state budgets, with midyear cuts the norm rather than the exception. It is expected that 2002-2003 will be another tight year, with shortfalls expected in many states. Budgets were leaner than they were in the early 1990s, and states used various methods to balance their budgets. Some states freed up funds by reducing employer contributions to retirement systems. Unlike the early 1990s, legislators are reluctant to raise taxes and want to try to manage spending within existing resources as much as possible. Recent tax actions will raise revenues in a few states, but tuition increases are occurring in most states. Tuition increases mean more revenue for colleges and universities, but a greater financial burden for families and the necessity for more need-based financial aid. Salary increases for teachers and faculty are down, and few new initiatives are being funded. (SLD)

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The 2002 Legislative Briefing

Gale F. Gaines

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Southern Regional Education Board

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Summary

The economic slowdown continued to dominate legislative deliberations of state budgets. Midyear cuts were the norm, not the exception, for SREB states in 2001-2002, and 2002-2003 is shaping up to be another tight year. Several states — including *Alabama, Delaware, Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, Maryland, Mississippi, Oklahoma, South Carolina* and *Virginia* — already have reduced their budgets or are facing serious revenue shortfalls in 2002-2003. Some states — including *Delaware, Florida, North Carolina, Texas* and *West Virginia* — expect shortfalls in 2003-2004. A recent court decision in *Tennessee* that requires the equalization of teachers' salaries statewide and a *Florida* constitutional amendment to limit K-12 class sizes likely will have tremendous fiscal effects in those states.

When the current recession hit, budgets already were leaner than they were in the early 1990s. Revenue growth during the 1990s often was directed into multiyear tax-reduction plans and specific initiatives rather than into general budget growth. Budgets are easier to compare from year to year during economic growth periods, but the creative financing used to balance the books when the economy weakens makes comparisons much harder. Many actions may close a budget hole immediately — such as using excess one-time funds. These short-term solutions merely postpone the hard decisions.

States used various methods to balance their budgets in 2001-2002. They reduced continuing budgets, used reserve funds, shifted unused balances from various state funds to the general funds, used one-time funding to support ongoing efforts, funded some budget items through sources other than the general funds, or required agencies to return larger balances at the end of the fiscal year. Several states freed up funds by reducing employer contributions to retirement systems. (A recent report suggested that more than half of states' retirement systems nationally are underfunded.)

An SREB report in December 1991 noted that many states were using these "temporary tactics" to balance state budgets during the recession of the early 1990s. The difference between the reactions to that recession and to today's economic situation is that legislators today are reluctant to raise taxes (following several years of tax reductions) to cover shortfalls and want to manage spending within existing resources as much as possible (exceptions are increases to tuition and fees at postsecondary institutions). The 1991 report also noted that at least 10 SREB states had raised taxes (usually sales taxes) between 1989-1990 and 1991-1992 and that some states increased taxes in more than one year. These increases, collectively, were estimated to raise more than $7 billion per year — an amount that surpassed the individual state budgets in two-thirds of the SREB states.

Recent tax actions will raise revenues in a few states. During a special session, *Alabama* increased telephone taxes and closed loopholes in corporate taxes. *Maryland* raised cigarette taxes to support reform in the way schools are financed but also included in the budget the final step in the five-year, 10 percent income-tax cut. *Tennessee* increased sales taxes and

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taxes on businesses, tobacco and alcohol. *Louisiana* renewed temporary sales taxes at a slightly reduced level, increased cigarette taxes, and proposed a plan to eliminate some sales taxes and increase income taxes for wealthier taxpayers. Voters approved the tax plan in November. *North Carolina* is retaining at the state level $333 million that in prior years went to local governments. Local governments may increase sales taxes by one-half cent to help make up for the revenue lost.

Tuition increases mean more revenue for colleges and universities but a greater financial burden for families and the necessity for more need-based financial aid. Salary increases for teachers and faculty, in most cases, are down. Few new initiatives are funded.

Revenue increases help shore up budgets

Most SREB states have state lotteries. *Tennessee* voters in November approved the creation of a lottery. *South Carolina* legislators approved a plan to distribute in 2002-2003 $259 million in proceeds from the state lottery, which was established in 2000. Most of this money will support scholarships, endowed chairs at research universities, postsecondary technology improvements, elementary and secondary school accountability, and improvements in academic programs for students in kindergarten through fifth grade. *North Carolina* debated but did not pass a bill allowing a lottery referendum.

Details of individual states' budget actions are compiled in SREB's *2002 Final Legislative and Budget Actions.*

Finance and flexibility

Maryland's Bridge to Excellence in Public Schools Act revises the way the state finances public schools and includes a cigarette-tax increase that is expected to raise about $100 million ($83.1 million for education) in 2002-2003. The bill will eliminate 27 programs that provide state aid to schools but will increase state funding to schools by $1.3 billion over six years (in addition to increases already required by law). The law creates a gap between the spending plan and anticipated revenues; the General Assembly is required to affirm by joint resolution in the 2004 session that the funding increase is within the state's resources. If no resolution is passed, funding will increase by only about 5 percent in each fiscal year through 2007-2008.

Bills in *Mississippi* and *Tennessee* addressed financial accountability. Mississippi legislation creates a task force to improve the management of school districts and their use of resources and to identify cost savings. Another bill requires audits to determine whether school districts comply with legal requirements for distributing and using funds for classroom supplies. Tennessee gradually will implement performance-based budgeting for state government. The commissioner of finance and administration will develop a schedule to include all agencies in the process by 2011-2012.

Oklahoma and *South Carolina* are allowing more flexibility in spending to help school districts through financial difficulties. Oklahoma's state Board of Education can waive penalties for districts that violate class-size limits because of economic hardship. Districts also may increase the amount of unused funding that they may carry over from one fiscal year to the next. South Carolina school districts may

transfer up to 20 percent of their allocations among programs that receive funding from the same source.

Studies will be conducted in *Louisiana* and *Mississippi*. Louisiana will study the increasing cost of insurance and its impact on local districts' budgets. Legislation in Mississippi requires that the state Board of Community and Junior Colleges hire a consultant to study the funding formula for state community colleges and to report the findings to the Legislature in December 2002.

Estimates of Salary and Tuition Increases for 2002-2003

	Estimated teacher-salary increase	Estimated faculty-salary increase	Estimated tuition increase for in-state undergraduates
Alabama	3%	3%, 2-year; —, 4-year	—
Arkansas	—[1]	Less than 2%	16.6%, 2-year; 6.2%, 4-year
Delaware	2%	2%	4.5% to 6.2%
Florida	—	— , 2-year; 2.5%, 4-year	3%, 2-year; 5%, 4-year
Georgia	3.25%	3.25%	4% to 6%
Kentucky	—	2.7%, 2-year; 0 to 4%, 4-year	7.1%, 2-year; 12%, 4-year
Louisiana	—[2]	0	3%
Maryland	—[3]	—	Average of 5.5%
Mississippi	6%	2%	0 to 19.2%, 2-year; 8%, 4-year
North Carolina	1.84%	0[4]	10.5%, 2-year; 8%, 4-year
Oklahoma	0[5]	Less than 2%	7%
South Carolina	0	—	Varies[6]
Tennessee	2%	2%	7.5%
Texas	—	—	—, 2-year; 4.8%, 4-year
Virginia	0	2.5% bonus	9%
West Virginia	$1,465	Average of 3.1%	2.7% to 8.3%, 2-year; 7.5% to 9.9%, 4-year

— Not available

1 The Arkansas Legislature approved raises for teachers of $3,000 over the biennium ($1,000 in 2001-2002 and $2,000 in 2002-2003). Because of the economy, districts are not required to give the raise in 2002-2003.

2 In Louisiana, no funds were earmarked for teacher pay raises, but legislation in 2001 requires that 50 percent of increases to the funding formula (after allocations for enrollment growth) be used to raise the pay of teachers and other certified staff.

3 Maryland provided funds for 1 percent pay raises for teachers, but actual raises are determined through collective bargaining. Preliminary information from five of 24 districts indicates raises of 1.5 percent to 3 percent.

4 North Carolina did not provide funds for pay raises, but faculty and state employees will receive 10 additional days of paid vacation.

5 No funds were earmarked for pay raises in Oklahoma, but the budget provides funds for a larger share of health insurance costs.

6 Tuition for in-state undergraduates in South Carolina will increase by an average of 18.2 percent at research universities, 15.1 percent at four-year colleges and universities, 27.8 percent at community colleges and 21.9 percent at technical colleges. Undergraduates at the Medical University of South Carolina will pay 7 percent more.

Compensation for teachers

Delaware is delaying until 2004 pay supplements of between 2 percent and 6 percent for teachers who gain additional skills and knowledge. *Kentucky* requires that teachers receive pay raises at least equal to the cost-of-living increase received by state employees, beginning in the 2004-2006 biennium. The bill allows districts to develop differentiated compensation programs that will provide additional pay above the minimum salary schedule for several purposes. These purposes may include, for example, recruiting and retaining teachers in shortage areas, recruiting and retaining highly skilled teachers for difficult assignments or hard-to-fill positions, or providing career advancement for teachers.

Georgia legislation clarifies that the 10 percent bonuses for teachers who earn certification through the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards will be recalculated each year. (Teachers previously had received annual bonuses of 10 percent of the salaries in effect when they earned the certification.) The bill also requires the Office of Education Accountability to study whether there is a correlation between student performance and teacher certification through the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards.

A bill in *Maryland* requires that, to be eligible for a $1,000 signing bonus, a teacher education graduate must graduate with a grade-point average equivalent to a 3.5 on a 4.0 scale. New teachers also have to meet the previous two requirements: They have to be in the top 10 percent of their graduating class and have to teach for at least three years.

Oklahoma is providing additional funding for employee benefits. The bill calls for the budget to pay for 75 percent (up from 50 percent) of teachers' health insurance in 2002-2003 and 100 percent of their coverage in 2003-2004.

Efforts to recruit and retain teachers

States continue efforts to attract and retain quality teachers

As states implement accountability programs, efforts to attract and retain quality teachers and other school staff have become increasingly visible. The new federal No Child Left Behind Act increases requirements for classroom teachers and affects states' efforts to ensure that every child has a high-quality teacher.

North Carolina will facilitate job-sharing by K-12 teachers who want to work part time. Classroom teachers who share a single teaching position and each work half time will be eligible for a prorated share of leave and benefits, including health insurance and retirement funds. The Legislative Research Commission will study benefits for state and education employees in part-time and job-sharing positions. Another study will look at the recruitment and retention of teachers and local flexibility for school systems. Another bill called for the state Board of Education and other entities to review teacher preparation programs and the teacher certification process.

Bills in *Florida, Kentucky, Maryland* and *Mississippi* addressed alternative means of preparing teachers and school leaders. Florida is authorizing local school boards to develop alternative-certification programs for teachers and administrators and to employ principals who are not certified educators if they later earn certification

through an alternative route provided by the districts. Kentucky will permit one-year provisional certification for a teacher who has not completed the required assessments if the employing district and teacher preparation program agree to assist the new teacher.

Maryland established a pilot program for training principals. Mississippi established a pilot alternative-certification program for people in other careers who are interested in teaching. Candidates must have bachelor's degrees and passing scores on the PRAXIS examinations. They are required to complete a training program during the summer and then a one-semester teaching internship.

Bills in *Kentucky* and *Tennessee* addressed substitute teachers. Kentucky will allow a person who works part time or as a substitute in a position traditionally included in the Teacher Retirement System to participate in the system. Tennessee legislation requires local districts to adopt policies regarding the employment of substitute teachers.

Paraprofessionals and teacher assistants also are resources for schools. *Georgia* will study paraprofessionals' duties and responsibilities. A resolution encourages the Georgia Board of Regents to allow paraprofessionals who pursue teaching degrees to substitute past teaching experience for the mandatory student-teaching experience. *Maryland* extended eligibility for the Maryland Teacher Scholarship Program to teaching assistants who have worked in the public schools for at least two years.

States help paraprofessionals and teaching asssistants become teachers

Alabama expanded the requirements for criminal-history checks of personnel at public and private schools. The bill expands both the types of background checks required and the classes of employees who must be checked. *Virginia* bills set staffing requirements for guidance counselors in elementary schools, define "school resource officer" and "school security officer," and call for requirements to govern the employment, training and certification of school security officers.

More information on attracting and retaining teachers is in SREB's *Quality Teachers: Can Incentive Policies Make a Difference?*

Retired teachers

Most SREB states allow retirees to return to teaching full time without affecting their retirement benefits. *Georgia* now will allow retired teachers, under certain circumstances, to return to teaching. Teachers who retired before January 2002, who retire with 30 years of service or who are at least 60 years old can return after one month of retirement to teach for up to five years in low-performing schools. Georgia also will study teacher retirement policies.

Kentucky retirees who return to work full time may earn no more than 75 percent of their salaries at the time they retired. Retirees previously were paid no less than a district's salary schedule designates for teachers with 10 years of experience.

Virginia legislation amends the conditions under which a retired teacher can return to teaching while continuing to receive retirement benefits. The bill requires a teacher to be retired for at least 30 days before returning to work. (A 12-month separation period had been required by state policy.) The bill also specifies that these teachers will have one-year contracts.

A bill in *West Virginia* allows those who retired from teaching in public schools to work full time or part time for colleges or universities without losing their retirement benefits.

Retirees also are being sought as substitute teachers. *West Virginia* allows retired teachers to teach up to 120 days per year while collecting retirement benefits. Legislation clarifies that someone who teaches for only half a day may not be charged for a full day toward the limit. Delaware also will allow retired teachers to serve as substitutes without affecting their retirement benefits.

More information about similar policies is in SREB's *Focus on Retired Teachers: State Policies Allowing Retirees to Return to the Classroom* (February 2002).

K-12 accountability

States continue to focus on accountability

Legislators continue to take an interest in school and student accountability, topics that likely will become even more important, given the federal No Child Left Behind Act. *West Virginia* legislation calls for a standards-based system to hold schools accountable for students' academic performance and improvement. It creates a council to track students' academic performance and progress and clarifies the responsibilities of the Office of Education Performance Audits so that the office does not duplicate other state agencies' reviews.

Delaware amended its student accountability law to require individual improvement plans for students who attend summer programs yet increase their performance only to "below the standard" (students previously were required to demonstrate proficiency). Without individual improvement plans, these students cannot be promoted to the next grade.

Kentucky legislation addressed gaps in student performance. The bill requires the Department of Education to provide each school with disaggregated data on its students' performance and an analysis of the achievement gaps between groups of students (male and female students, disabled and nondisabled students, students who are and are not economically disadvantaged, students with and without English proficiency, and minority and nonminority students). Another bill charges the Office of Education Accountability with reviewing personnel policies, particularly in districts where minorities account for at least 8 percent of students but fewer than 8 percent of teachers and administrators.

North Carolina, South Carolina and *Tennessee* passed legislation related to low-performing schools. The North Carolina State Board of Education is directed to take control of a school when the school and the local board do not take steps to improve student performance as recommended by a school improvement team. South Carolina requires the state Department of Education to help low-performing schools implement mentoring programs to improve student achievement. Tennessee revised procedures to place schools on probation and to review schools that are on probation for failing to meet performance standards or the regulations of the state Board of Education.

Tennessee and *Virginia* amended state testing programs. Tennessee deleted the requirement that students take an exit examination in order to graduate from high school. Students still may take an exit examination, and the results will be shared

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with the Legislative Oversight Committee on Education. Virginia's budget postpones until spring 2004 the Web-based state testing program adopted in 2000. Virginia now requires the state Department of Education to maintain a Web site on which educators can recommend improvements to state standards and assessments.

States change testing programs

North Carolina will study the state testing program and determine which tests comply with federal assessment and accountability provisions, with state accountability laws and with a court ruling regarding the state's school-finance system. The *Georgia* General Assembly also has called for a study of its state testing program.

Coursework, academic credit and help for students

Several bills regarding credits for high school graduation passed during 2002 sessions. *Oklahoma* now allows certain "contextual" math and science courses to count toward high school graduation. Contextual courses are defined as those that utilize "real-world problems and projects in a way that helps students understand the application of that knowledge."

Virginia authorized the state Board of Education to accept industry certification and state licensure examinations in the place of state assessments in awarding credit for career and technical education courses. Another Virginia bill directs the state Board of Education to require students who pursue standard high school diplomas to complete at least two sequential electives that provide a foundation for further education, training or preparation for employment.

Kentucky will strengthen the state's participation in the College Board's Advanced Placement Program and will expand its availability to students. Beginning in 2002-2003, high schools award credit toward graduation for any course a student successfully completes through the Kentucky Virtual High School. By 2003-2004, all high schools must offer advanced courses (such as Advanced Placement, International Baccalaureate and dual enrollment) through either on-site or online instruction. The Council on Postsecondary Education will require colleges and universities to award college credit for scores of 3 or higher on Advanced Placement exams.

Maryland authorized the state superintendent of education to create online courses and services, develop standards for these courses and services, and review courses to ensure that they are aligned with Maryland's curriculum standards.

Bills in *Maryland* and *West Virginia* should result in extra help for students. Maryland created the College Readiness for Disadvantaged and Capable Students Act to help ninth- and 10th-graders prepare for college. College and university governing boards in West Virginia are required to develop policies to award credit toward graduation to college students who tutor or mentor students in public schools.

North Carolina legislation encourages local school boards to require superintendents to assign more-experienced teachers with positive evaluations to teach core academic courses in the middle grades.

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Many states require summer school for students who fall behind in their studies. Information on summer school is in SREB's *Summer School: Unfulfilled Promise* and *Summer School and Summer Learning 2002: Progress and Challenges.* SREB reports about students' academic success include *Opening Doors to the Future: Preparing Low-achieving Middle Grades Students to Succeed in High School, Improving Achievement is About Focus and Completing the Right Courses* and *High School to College and Careers: Aligning State Policy.* Find out about GED completers in *Focus on the GED: Who Takes It and Why?*

Education for young children

All SREB states require school systems to provide either full- or half-day kindergarten, and most fund preschool programs. *West Virginia* legislation requires each county board of education to establish a voluntary early-education program for 4-year-olds before the 2012-2013 school year. Each district must coordinate its plans with existing programs, such as Head Start and private child-care providers, and those existing programs can be counted toward fulfilling the requirements of the legislation. *Florida* voters amended the state constitution to create a voluntary prekindergarten program for all 4-year-olds by the 2004-2005 school year.

Some states expand services for young children

Louisiana amended its 2001 law that established an early-childhood development program. The original law required every district (except the largest ones) that provided a prekindergarten program for 4-year-olds to offer services — including before- and after-school child care — to all children in the district for a total of 10 hours per day. Legislation in 2002 allows districts, with permission from the state Board of Education, to delay full implementation of these services if the districts have specific plans to meet that requirement within three years. The bill also increases the number of districts that are not required to offer programs to all children.

Maryland districts have been required to provide half-day kindergarten. Legislation requires school districts by 2007-2008 to provide full-day kindergarten for all children and free prekindergarten for 4-year-olds from low-income families.

Early intervention for children with health issues or developmental delays increases their chances of success in school. A resolution in *Georgia* calls for a committee to study health screenings for young children entering school. *Maryland* created the Maryland Infant and Toddler Program, which will serve young children who have developmental delays.

For more information, see SREB's *Focus on Quality: Prekindergarten Programs in SREB States.*

Education governance and organization

Legislative sessions often include discussions of governance and organizational changes. *Florida* continued its governance changes by revising the entire education code to bring it in line with the new education-governance structure mandated by constitutional amendments in 1998. The new structure has a single board to oversee all levels of education, but voters in November decided to create a board of

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governors to oversee the state university system. This board will establish the powers and duties of each university's board of trustees.

Legislation in *Delaware* creates a task force that will study the structure and delivery of education as it relates to an increased sense of community; increased choices for all students and their families; alternative settings for students; and the structure and boundaries of educational governance.

The state Board of Community Colleges in *North Carolina* will offer some programs regionally to reduce program duplication by colleges that are near one another. An outside consultant will study the organization and structure of the Community College System.

States work to increase government efficiency and effectiveness

Alabama is transferring from the state Department of Education to the Department of Postsecondary Education the responsibility for adult education and for the program that licenses for-profit postsecondary schools. *Mississippi* voters in November 2003 will have the opportunity to change the structure of the 12-member Board of Trustees for Institutions of Higher Learning. *South Carolina* will create a review board to oversee a new lottery-funded endowment for university research.

Legislation in *Virginia* establishes the Advisory Council on Career and Technical Education to facilitate the coordination of career and technical education in the public schools. It also will recommend policies and funding and will promote public/private partnerships.

Louisiana will study the feasibility of dividing large school districts into smaller units. *South Carolina* calls for the state Board of Education to study the benefits of establishing one date on which all schools statewide would begin the school year. *Maryland* is replacing the elected school board in Prince George's County with one jointly appointed by the governor and county executive officer. A similar change was made to the Baltimore city school system in 1997.

Charter schools

Twelve SREB states now have charter-school laws

Tennessee became the 12th SREB state to authorize charter schools. The legislation allows three types of charters: those that provide alternatives for students in schools that do not make adequate yearly progress in the state's accountability system (limited to the number of low-performing schools in the state); those that serve special-education students; and those that serve primarily at-risk students and are created through partnerships with teacher education programs at public colleges or universities (limited to nine charters).

Florida, Georgia, South Carolina and *Virginia* amended charter-school laws. Florida created a commission to review charter-school appeals when local districts deny charters. The Florida Board of Education makes the final decisions on appeals. The state Board of Education in Georgia will develop policies to govern charter applications. The legislation also specifies that conversion charter schools (existing schools that become charter schools) are to be treated the same as other local schools with respect to funding. Start-up charter schools (schools that are charter schools from the beginning) are to receive their shares of funds for instruc-

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tion and administration; and, when feasible, should receive funds for transportation, food service and building programs.

South Carolina amended the charter-school law that was ruled unconstitutional in 2000. The new law allows a charter school's demographics to differ from the surrounding district's demographics by up to 20 percent (previously 10 percent) and permits more variation under certain circumstances. The bill creates the Charter School Advisory Committee to review charter applications and to ensure that the applications comply with the new law. The bill also requires all charter-school teachers in core academic subjects to be certified or to have degrees in the subjects they teach.

Virginia bills clarify that colleges and universities may apply to establish charter schools. The state Board of Education now will include the number of denied charters in its annual report to the governor and General Assembly. All local school boards must accept and review charter applications and must include charter-school students in the districts' enrollment counts upon which state and local funding are based.

Most state charter-school legislation did not address the topic of online charter schools. There are about 30 online charter schools in the nation, and interest in such schools is growing. For more information, see SREB's *Virtual Learning and Charter Schools: Issues and Potential Impact.*

Nursing education

States address shortages of nursing faculty

Some states are addressing personnel shortages in nursing. *Florida's* Nursing Shortage Solution Act authorizes the Department of Health to make payments on the student loans of graduates from accredited nursing programs who work in certain public facilities. The bill creates a grant program that will support nursing education programs in middle and high schools when funds can be appropriated.

Kentucky legislation creates the Nursing Workforce Foundation. The foundation will solicit contributions from public and private sources to support awards to nursing education programs, nurses who seek advanced degrees, nursing employers and other groups.

The report *SREB Study Indicates Serious Shortage of Nursing Faculty* recommends ways to deal with nursing shortages. The results of the 2002 SREB nursing survey also offer more information about this topic.

Affordability

As states and colleges and universities increase tuition, several states have increased funding for student financial aid, especially need-based aid. Colleges and universities in *Virginia* raised tuition for the first time in several years, but the state encouraged them to use some of the new tuition revenue for financial aid. Legislators in *South Carolina* earmarked $94 million from the new state lottery for student financial aid.

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Georgia created a college savings plan for people who wish to save for future college costs. *Louisiana* amended its START college-savings program. The bill expands the types of expenses for which funds from these accounts may be used. Acceptable expenses now include tuition and required fees for undergraduate and graduate students, tuition and fees for nonresidents with START accounts who are attending Louisiana colleges and universities, room and board, and other similar fees and charges. The only eligible expenses previously were tuition and fees for in-state undergraduates.

Oklahoma students who graduate from high schools that are not accredited by the state Board of Education will qualify for financial aid through the Oklahoma Higher Learning Access program if they meet the other eligibility requirements. *Louisiana* will study the feasibility of providing incentives for students to attend Louisiana colleges and universities and to pursue careers in which there are critical shortages of personnel.

West Virginia calls for colleges and universities to develop rules regarding credit-card solicitation on campuses. The Legislature also established a council to recommend strategies for coordinating sources of student financial aid.

Summaries of SREB states' final legislative actions are available upon request. To order any publication listed in this report, contact the Southern Regional Education Board. The reports and 2002 Final Legislative and Budget Actions *also are available on SREB's Web site: www.sreb.org.*

For more information, contact Gale F. Gaines, SREB director of legislative services, at (404) 875-9211, Ext. 282, or gale.gaines@sreb.org.

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